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13 April 1953

6. On the basis of presently available evidence it appears unlikely, although not impossible, that either of the widely divergent explanations will prove to be valid. The truth is more likely to be somewhere in between. At the moment, we estimate tentatively that the Communists are now prepared to make at least those concessions which are necessary to reach an armistice in Korea. But even this estimate cannot be made firmly. There are ambiguities in the Communist proposals with respect to the settlement of the POW issue which may conceal insuperable obstacles to the conclusion of an armistice. Moreover it is still possible that, in connection with the armistice negotiations, the Communists may introduce new conditions, either at Panmunjon or in the UN, which the US would find extremely difficult to accept, but which the allies of the US would not be disposed to reject, especially in the atmosphere of good feeling engendered by the new Communist tactics. In any event, it seems almost certain that, in the political discussions following an armistice, the Communists will attempt to inject issues, such as Formosa and the admission of Communist China to the UN, which are extraneous to a peace settlement in Korea.

6a. To what extent the Communists are likely to make concessions on issues other than Korea remains highly uncertain. The possibility of concessions will depend upon where, between the widely divergent alternatives noted above, the true Communist course lies. In any event, we believe it probable that the Communists will open discussions on other outstanding issues.

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In some instances their proposals may be designed solely for political warfare purposes; in other, they may be offered with the intention of reaching an agreement.

7. The Communists may make dramatic proposals at any time for free elections in Germany, for the withdrawal of occupation forces and for reunification of the country. We believe that such proposals would probably contain conditions which the Kremlin would intend to be unacceptable to the West, or that, in making these proposals, the Kremlin would intend to frustrate their implementation. These proposals would be designed to frustrate the EDC program and the rearmament of West Germany, capitalizing on the atmosphere created by Communist concessions on Korea and by the recent Soviet conciliatory behavior. We still believe that the Kremlin will not give up control of East Germany unless there has been a far greater change in Soviet objectives, or in the Soviet approach to the attainment of these objectives, than there is reason to believe on the basis of present evidence.

10. Future events may demonstrate that the Kremlin is prepared to make the concessions necessary to make possible an extended period of "peaceful coexistence". Our present view, however, is that the Kremlin is merely seeking to create an atmosphere in which resistance to Communism will be at least temporarily weakened.

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